United Nations ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2014/1

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
2 April 2014

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes

Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management

Ninth meeting
Geneva, 25 and 26 June 2014
Item 1 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the ninth meeting

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting on Wednesday, 25 June 2014, at 10 a.m.*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Adoption of the report of the previous meeting.
3. Progress in the ratification process, including the ratification of the amendments to open the Convention to countries outside the region.

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* Delegates attending the meeting at the Palais des Nations are requested to register no later than two weeks before the meeting using the new electronic procedure. Registration is available through the following link: https://www2.unece.org/uncdb/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=zQd2vF. The registration code for this meeting is 68578. For assistance with registration, please see the instructions on the meeting's web page (www.unece.org/env/water/9th_wgiwrm_2014.html) or contact the secretariat by e-mail (katri.veldre@unece.org). On their way to the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix (see the map on the ECE website: www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html). In case of difficulty, please contact the secretariat by telephone at +41 22 917 1911.

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4. Support to implementation and accession:

   (a) Assistance supporting accession to and implementation of the Convention through projects on the ground and capacity-building;

   (b) Implementation Committee;

   (c) Exchange of experience of joint bodies;

   (d) Consideration of the need for reporting under the Convention;

   (e) Promoting ratification of the Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters.

5. European Union Water Initiative and National Policy Dialogues.

6. Quantifying the benefits of transboundary cooperation.

7. Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins.

8. Thematic assessment of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus.

9. Opening of the Convention to countries outside the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region:

   (a) Building capacity on the Convention outside the region and promoting exchange of experience worldwide;

   (b) Synergies with the 1997 Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses;

   (c) Cooperation with the Global Environment Facility.

10. Promotion of the Convention and establishment of strategic partnerships:

   (a) Promotion of the Convention, its activities and guidelines;

   (b) Seventh World Water Forum and its preparatory process;

   (c) Cooperation with other international multilateral environmental agreements;

   (d) Cooperation with UN-Water and other partners;

   (e) Follow-up to the Seventh "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference.

11. Water in the post-2015 development agenda.

12. Initial discussion on the third comprehensive assessment.

13. Implementation of the programme of work for 2013–2015 and initial discussion of the programme of work for 2016–2018.

14. Date and venue of the next meeting of the Working Group.

15. Other business.

16. Closure of the meeting.

II. Annotations

1. The main objective of the ninth meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management is to review the implementation of the programme of work for 2013–2015 (ECE/MP.WAT/37/Add.1) for the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention).

2. The meeting will be held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. It will start at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, 25 June 2014 and end at 4 p.m. on Thursday, 26 June 2014. It will be held back to back with the meeting of the European Union Water Initiative (EUWI) Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia Working Group on 24 June.

3. The working languages for the meeting will be English, French, Russian and Spanish.

4. All relevant documentation will be available on a dedicated page of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Water Convention website.[1]

1. Adoption of the agenda

Tentative timing: 10–10.10 a.m., Wednesday, 25 June

5. The co-Chairs of the Working Group will open the meeting. The Working Group is expected to adopt the agenda as set out in the present document.

6. The co-Chairs will explain the background and main objectives of the meeting.

Documentation

Annotated provisional agenda for the ninth meeting (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2014/1)

2. Adoption of the report of the previous meeting

Tentative timing: 10.10–10.20 a.m., Wednesday, 25 June

7. The Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management is expected to adopt the report of its eighth meeting (Geneva, 25–26 September 2013).

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management on its eighth meeting (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2013/2)

3. Progress in the ratification process, including the ratification of the amendments to open the Convention to countries outside the region

Tentative timing: 10.20–10.40 a.m., Wednesday, 25 June

8. Having reached the sufficient number of ratifications, the amendments opening the Convention for accession by non-ECE countries entered into force on 6 February 2013, turning the Convention into a global framework for transboundary water cooperation. However, all countries that were Parties to the Convention on 28 November 2003 will need to ratify the amendments before non-ECE countries can accede to the Convention. Although the Meeting of the Parties in decision VI/3 at its sixth session had set 31 December 2013 as deadline for those ratifications, as of 31 March 2014 four Parties had still not ratified the amendments.

[1] www.unece.org/env/water/9th_wgiwrm_2014.html.

9. Delegations will be invited to report on any recent or anticipated developments with respect to the ratification of the Convention and the amendments to articles 25 and 26 in their respective countries.

10. The Working Group will discuss how to foster ratification of the Convention and especially how to promote ratification of the amendments.

Documentation

Decision VI/3 on accession by non-United Nations Economic Commission for Europe countries (see ECE/MP.WAT/37/Add.2)

Ratification status of the ECE Water Convention, its amendments and Protocols (WG.1/2014/INF.1)

4. Support to implementation and accession

Tentative timing: 10.40 a.m.–12.30 p.m., Wednesday, 25 June

(a) Assistance supporting accession to and implementation of the Convention through projects on the ground and capacity-building

11. The secretariat will inform the Working Group on the progress achieved in different projects supporting implementation of the Convention in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, developed with the support of the ECE Regional Adviser on Environment. The Working Group will provide comments as needed, including on the future development of such projects.

(b) Implementation Committee

12. The Working Group will be informed about the second and third meetings of the Implementation Committee, held on 12 December 2013 in Geneva and on 15 May 2014 in Bologna, Italy, respectively.

Documentation

Report of the second meeting of the Implementation Committee (ECE/MP.WAT/IC/2013/4)

(c) Exchange of experience of joint bodies

13. The lead Parties for the work on the exchange of experience of joint bodies will inform the Working Group about the second of two workshops foreseen in the 2013–2015 programme of work to promote the exchange of experience and good practices between joint bodies worldwide and to draw lessons learned and recommendations — "River Basin Commissions and other Joint Bodies for Transboundary Water Cooperation: Technical Aspects" (Geneva, 9–10 April 2014) — and will give an overview of future plans in this area.

14. The Working Group will discuss the outcomes and recommendations of the workshops as well as suggested future activities in this area.

Documentation

Conclusions and recommendations of the two workshops on joint bodies under the Convention in 2013 and 2014 (WG.1/2014/INF.2)

(d) Consideration of the need for reporting under the Convention

15. The Working Group was requested by the Meeting of the Parties to carry out, in consultation with the Implementation Committee, an analysis on the needs for reporting under the Convention, taking into account the capacity of countries and other relevant reporting mechanisms. The analysis will serve as a basis for the possible elaboration of the scope and modalities of a reporting mechanism to be submitted for possible adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its seventh session. To support this analysis, a questionnaire was sent to Parties, other States and organizations in October 2013 in order to understand their views on reporting as well as their criteria for the possible design of such a mechanism, if the Meeting of the Parties should decide to introduce it.

16. The Working Group will discuss the draft analysis on the need for reporting, as well as the comments made by the Implementation Committee and, depending on the outcomes of the draft analysis, will decide how to prepare a draft proposal on a reporting mechanism.

Documentation

Draft analysis on the needs for reporting under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2014/3)

(e) Promoting ratification of the Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters

17. The secretariat will inform the Working Group on the status of the Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters to the Water Convention and the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.

5. European Union Water Initiative and National Policy Dialogues

Tentative timing: 12.30–1 p.m., Wednesday, 25 June

18. The Working Group will be informed about recent developments under the European Union (EU) Water Initiative (EUWI) and its National Policy Dialogues process regarding integrated water resources management activities, facilitated by ECE, and water supply and sanitation activities, facilitated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). ECE and OECD are the key strategic partners of the EUWI in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. In particular, the Working Group will be briefed about the outcomes of the meeting of the EUWI Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia Working Group, which is being held back to back with the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management on 24 June in Geneva.

19. The Working Group will examine the progress and lessons learned from the dialogues. It will discuss future development of the dialogues and agree on ways and means to further strengthen them.

Documentation

Report on the Implementation of the National Policy Dialogues (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2014/4)

6. Quantifying the benefits of transboundary cooperation

Tentative timing: 3–3.40 p.m., Wednesday, 25 June

20. The Meeting of the Parties at its sixth session decided to support countries to estimate the benefits of transboundary cooperation (including the costs of non-action) by providing guidance on how to identify, quantify and communicate the range of benefits linked to cooperation. In this regard, the Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the Workshop "Counting our gains: Sharing experiences on identifying, assessing and communicating the benefits of transboundary water cooperation" (Geneva, 22–23 May 2014), as well as about the progress in development of the policy guidance note on identifying, assessing and communicating the benefits of transboundary water cooperation.

21. The Working Group will discuss the draft policy guidance note and next steps for its further development and finalization. Participants will be invited to provide comments.

Documentation

Draft policy guidance note on identifying, assessing and communicating the benefits of transboundary water cooperation "Counting our gains" (WG.1/2014/INF.3)

7. Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins

Tentative timing: 3.40–4.20 p.m., Wednesday, 25 June

22. The co-Chairs of the Task Force on Water and Climate will brief participants on the outcomes of the second meeting of the global network of basins working on climate change adaptation (Geneva, 13–14 February 2014), as well as on the preparation of the collection of lessons learned and good practices on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins. Representatives of the pilot projects and the global network of basins will be invited to report on their activities. The Working Group will provide comments, as needed, on the work accomplished and the future plans. It will also discuss the finalization of the collection of lessons learned and good practices.

Documentation

Progress report on the collection of lessons learned and good practices on water and adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2014/5)

Progress report of the pilot projects on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins (WG.1/2014/INF.4)

8. Thematic assessment of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus

Tentative timing: 4.20–5 p.m., Wednesday, 25 June

23. The secretariat will report on the progress achieved in the thematic assessment on the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus, in particular the development of the methodology and the assessment of the first two transboundary basins, namely the Alazani/Ganikh Basin, shared by Azerbaijan and Georgia, and the Sava Basin, shared by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia, as well as about future plans. Representatives of the concerned basins and other participants of the Working Group will be invited to make comments. The Working Group will discuss the next steps.

Documentation

Progress report on the thematic assessment of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2014/6)

9. Opening of the Convention to countries outside the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

Tentative timing: 5–6 p.m., Wednesday, 25 June

(a) Building capacity on the Convention outside the region and promoting exchange of experience worldwide

24. The Working Group will be informed of the outcomes of the Workshop, "The Water Convention: key aspects and opportunities for Arab Countries" (11–12 June 2014), as well as other efforts to involve non-ECE countries in the Convention's activities and to raise awareness on the Convention beyond the ECE region, for example during the fifth African Water Week (Dakar, 26–31 May 2014). The Working Group will discuss how to further promote the Convention beyond the ECE region, including through subregional workshops and with partners. In this regard, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) will be invited to report about its activities and the efforts undertaken to provide assistance to interested United Nations Member States to implement the Convention in relation to transboundary groundwaters following the decision on this topic adopted at the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties (decision VI/5).

25. Interested non-ECE countries will be invited to inform the Working Group about their interest in participating in the Convention's activities and possible accession, as well as their needs and expectations.

(b) Synergies with the 1997 Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses

26. The 1997 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses (Watercourses Convention) is expected to enter into force in 2014.[2] In view of that Convention's entry into force, current and prospective Parties to either the Watercourses or the Water Convention, and in particular Parties to both of them, will be invited to discuss how the two international legal frameworks could interact. They will also be invited to explore how the two treaties could support each other and build synergies, including how the experience and guidance material collected under the ECE Water Convention could support the implementation of the United Nations Watercourses Convention. Countries will also be invited to discuss the possible future institutional governance frameworks for the two Conventions.

(c) Cooperation with the Global Environment Facility

27. The Working Group will discuss how further to strengthen cooperation with the Global Environment Facility, following the decision on this topic adopted at the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties (decision VI/4).

[2] As of 18 March 2014, only one more Party was needed for the United Nations Watercourses Convention to enter into force.

10. Promotion of the Convention and establishment of strategic partnerships

Tentative timing: 9.30–11.10 a.m., Thursday, 26 June

(a) Promotion of the Convention, its activities and guidelines

28. The Working Group will be informed about the activities implemented during the International Year of Water Cooperation, 2013. The Working Group will also be informed about the Water Convention's involvement in international events such as the World Water Week (Stockholm, 31 August–5 September 2014).

29. The Working Group will be invited to provide comments and suggestions on the promotion of the Convention internationally. Focal points will be invited to report on their national efforts to promote the Convention.

(b) Seventh World Water Forum and its preparatory process

30. The Working Group will be informed about the preparations for the Seventh World Water Forum, to be held in the Republic of Korea in Daegu and Gyeongbuk from 12 to 17 April 2015, with a particular focus on the transboundary cooperation theme and the European regional process. The Working Group will discuss ways and means of ensuring the visibility of the Convention and its work at the Forum.

(c) Cooperation with other international multilateral environmental agreements

31. The Working Group will discuss how to increase synergies and cooperation with other multilateral environmental agreements. In this regard, participants will be informed about the progress achieved under the Protocol on Water and Health and the outcomes of the third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (Oslo, 25–27 November 2013). The Working Group will discuss how to further strengthen joint work with the Protocol.

32. The Working Group will be briefed on the plans and progress achieved in the development of a checklist for contingency planning and its testing in a transboundary case by the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents. The Working Group will provide comments and agree on the next steps in this area.

Documentation

Report of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health on its third session (ECE/MP.WH/11–EUDCE/1206123/3.1/2013/MOP-3/06 and Add.1 and 2)

(d) Cooperation with UN-Water and other partners

33. The secretariat will inform the Working Group about the contributions of ECE to the activities of UN-Water, and in particular to the UN-Water Thematic Priority Area on Transboundary Waters.

(e) Follow-up to the Seventh "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference

34. At its nineteenth session (Geneva, 22–25 October 2013), the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy held a mid-term review of the main outcomes of the Seventh "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference (Astana, 21–23 September 2011). The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes and the related decision by the Committee with regard to the review of the implementation of the Astana Water Action.

Documentation

Report of the Committee on Environmental Policy on its nineteenth session (ECE/CEP/2013/2)

11. Water in the post-2015 development agenda

Tentative timing: 11.10 a.m.–noon, Thursday, 26 June

35. The Working Group will be informed about the latest developments in the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda, in particular in relation to water, including the UN-Water report, *A Post-2015 Global Goal for Water: Synthesis of key findings and recommendations from UN-Water*.[3] The Working Group will discuss the role and place of water in the post-2015 framework, in particular with a view to advancing sustainable water management and transboundary water cooperation. The Working Group will also discuss the possible role of the Water Convention in implementing a possible Sustainable Development Goal on water.

12. Initial discussion on the third comprehensive assessment

Tentative timing: noon–12.30 p.m., Thursday, 26 June

36. The Meeting of the Parties at its sixth session entrusted the Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus, in cooperation with the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, to prepare an analysis for the scoping of the third comprehensive assessment of transboundary waters and, if applicable, a concept for it. The Working Group will have initial discussions on the needs, geographic and thematic scope, modalities and possible timeline for the preparation of a third comprehensive assessment, also considering the global opening of the Convention and the post-2015 development agenda. The Working Group will agree on next steps in this regard.

13. Implementation of the programme of work for 2013–2015 and initial discussion of the programme of work for 2016–2018

Tentative timing: 2.30.–3.40 p.m., Thursday, 26 June

37. The Working Group will review progress made in the implementation of the Convention's programme of work for 2013–2015, and elaborate upon it, if necessary. In this regard, the Working Group will consider the bodies designated to implement the programme of work, including the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC), which has been without a host country since 2013. The Working Group will discuss the funding for the different activities of the programme of work, including potential fundraising options.

38. The Working Group will start discussions on the preparations for the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties, scheduled for November 2015 in Budapest. In particular, to facilitate the discussion at its tenth meeting on the future priority areas of work for the period 2016–2018 and the related activities, the Working Group will exchange views on the future programme of work. The Working Group is expected to entrust its co-Chairs, in

[3] Online document (27 January 2014), available from www.unwater.org/topics/water-in-the-post-2015-development-agenda/en/.

cooperation with the Bureau, with preparing a proposal for the future programme of work for consideration at its next meeting.

Documentation

Programme of work for 2013–2015 (ECE/MP.WAT/37/Add.1)

14. Date and venue of the next meeting of the Working Group

Tentative timing: 3.40–3.50 p.m., Thursday, 26 June

39. The Working Group will determine the preliminary date and venue for its next meeting. It will also be informed of the schedule of other meetings under the Convention and its Protocol on Water and Health.

15. Other business

Tentative timing: 3.50 p.m.–4 p.m., Thursday, 26 June

40. Delegates wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

16. Closure of the meeting

41. The co-Chairs will close the meeting at 4 p.m. on Thursday, 26 June 2014.